FOLDER

2

POEMS

JOHN ASHBERY
ELISE ASHER
DAISY ALDAN
ANNE BERNAYS
ARTHUR GREGOR
KENNETH KOCH
V.R. LANG
GERRIT LANSING
FRANK O'HARA
M.C. RICHARDS
JAMES SCHUYLER
DONALD WINDHAM
HARRIET ZINNES
ROBERT CORDIER
JORGE CUESTA
PHILIPE THOBY-MARCELIN

A MASQUE

EUGENE WALTER

SHORT STORIES

KENWARD ELMSLIE
ANNE RYAN
RUTH L. YORCK

TWO PHOTOGRAPHS

WALTER SILVER

AN ORIGINAL SERIGRAPH IN FOUR COLORS

ALFRED LESLIE

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FOLDER Volume 1, Number 2: 1954

DONALD WINDHAM	To Three Italians
JOHN ASHBERY	A Pastoral
ALFRED LESLIE	*Serigraph: Seated Figure*
FRANK O'HARA	The Hunter
	Hatred
ANNE BERNAYS	Love Is A Circus
V. R. LANG	Dummy In The Crowd
ELISE ASHER	Circus Casualty
ANNE RYAN	She Was Divorced
GERRIT LANSING	The Castle of Flowering Birds
	History
KENNETH KOCH	January Nineteenth
	Plantation Days
EUGENE WALTER	Singerie-Songerie
WALTER SILVER	*Two Photographs*
DAISY ALDAN	Four Poems
ARTHUR GREGOR	The Meatpacker's Son
RUTH L. YORCK	This Joe Somebody
KENWARD ELMSLIE	The Weather Of Ripeness
HARRIET ZINNES	Starface
MARY CAROLINE RICHARDS	A Land
JAMES SCHUYLER	The Infant Jesus Of Prague
PHILIPE THOBY-MARCELIN	The Pathetic Runaway
	The Noble Servant
ROBERT CORDIER	Poem
JORGE CUESTA	Voice

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Donald Windham

TO THREE ITALIANS

To R...

Undisillusioned, she knows that heaven approached
is another earth, and having no illusions
she is not ashamed to mime an earthly paradise.
When the sun throws a shadow around a corner
to meet her, she waits although she keeps moving.
For a shadow is as apt to be an ancient river god,
stepped down from a fountain, as a new friend,
and new friends are everywhere.
Celestial and mundane, outward architecture magnified,
although she has but to step into a church
or love a friend
to find not diminution but the all too real,
this only proves the celestiality of her world.
Whether she crosses a bridge of angels, or falls
where angels have fallen
on the deck below, it is the same.
She has conquered space. No distance
separates the angels' bridge from where Bruno burned.
With her, even heaven approached
retains its light and projects her shadow
whether you walk into the sun toward the new piazza
or, a field of flowers,
the old.
Or toward the little moon on the street of paradise.

To T...

Turquoise leopards guard her doors,
almost impossible for the common lover to reach.
At home, where efficiency is the only sin,
she hints with her past that a pastoral fate
may be necessary for understanding.
Life, a living goat torn limb from limb
by a lion and panther above the gate to hell,
she accepts.

A white cotton tent beneath the sun.
A daised balcony above a silver sea.

Although ten feet beneath the clayey soil
she accepts death as a thing before demons.
Her landscape's plants, silver on red soil,
wait through winter, the smallest flower form
secure as the greatest oak that spring will rise again
into the same forms.
A plate and a piece of bread are beside her,
an egg in her hand.

The old tombs are beneath the new.

To F...

The moon greens the Giotto sky
above her piscina. Bathers soap themselves
beneath their underwear, above David
naked in the square.
Beneath the timestained buildings
she sinks into a night soft of noises.
The rattle of tramways over ancient cobblestones
does not waken her.
Medieval dark thickens, loud with boot echoes
upon the pavement, quiet with sounds soft of love.
Concealed by cupids and shields, dawn comes,
a trumpet blast of silence.
She draws her landscape on the sky.

John Ashbery

A Pastoral

Perhaps no vice endears me to the showboat,
Whose license permeates our deep south.
The shows are simple, not yet easy, with handsome
And toy horns trying tried and true melodies.
Silently, that vice might speak from the shade:
"Your capers have misdirected all your animals."

But, hating and laughing, risen with animals,
Who is denied admission to the showboat?
Nevertheless, because of tomorrow's shade
The lad intends to file with the green deep south.
His ankles seek the temple melodies.
His mischief stirs the rocks and keeps them handsome.

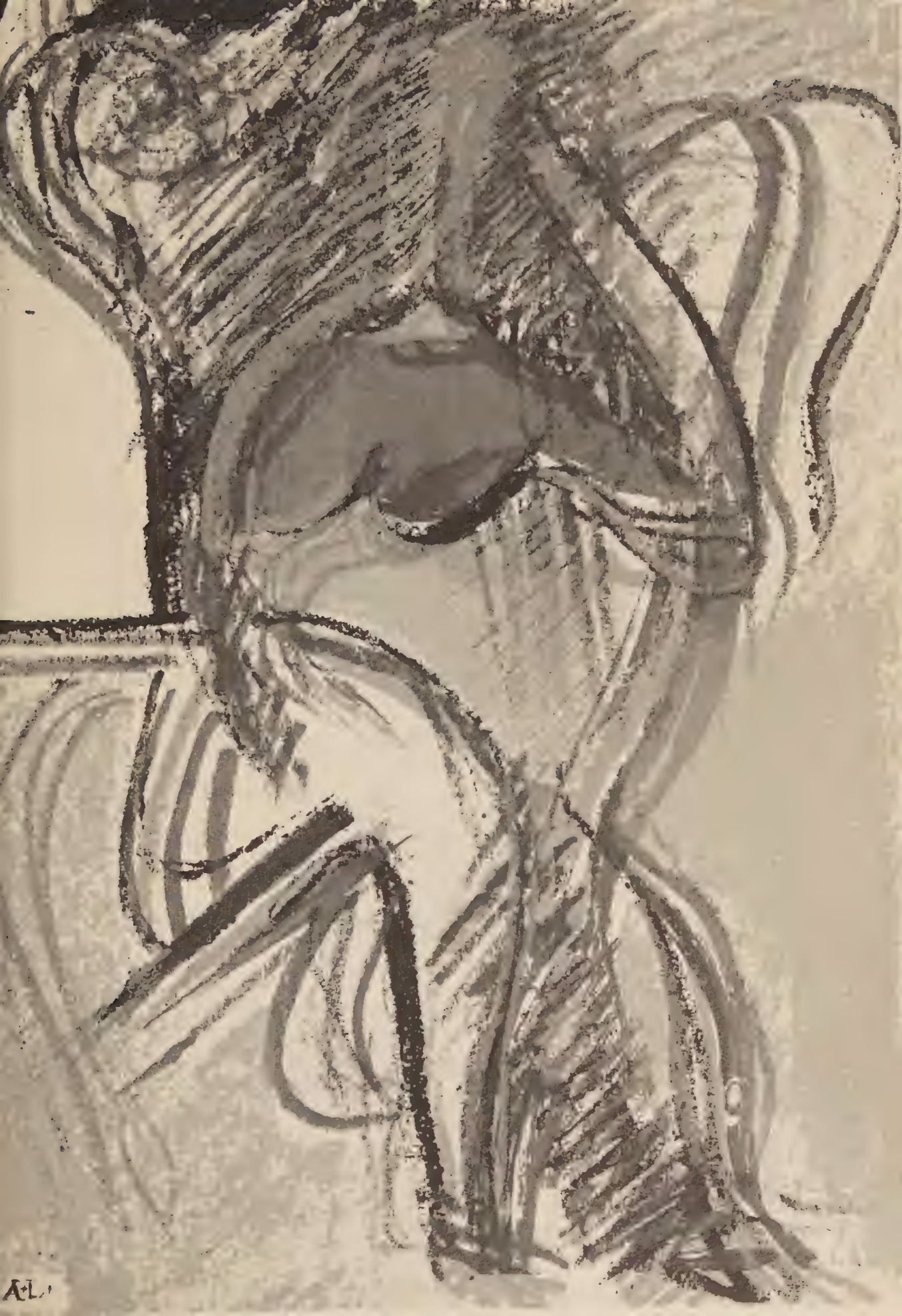
The next day, finding him less handsome,
They side with the foreseeing of animals.
From the corral the melodies
Begin to flow, teaching the showboat
(Thick is the tambour, oversold the deep south)
What flowers to press back into shade.

My affairs wrapped in shade,
My mouse-colored head shall mobilize that handsome
Energetic enemy of the deep south.
Lately worms have pestered the animals.
Alarmed at our actions, a glittering showboat
Fled from the glade of supposed melodies.

And no more in our society living melodies
Break forth under the little or no shade.
The days are guarded. A miserable showboat
Plies back and forth between the handsome
Rocks, unwatched by animals
Whose glistening breath wakens forgetfulness of the deep south.

Truly the lesson of the deep south
Is how to avoid lingering beyond melodies
That cleave to the heart before it learns what animals
Strangers are. Knowing shade
Is their apology, let us never excuse handsome
Terror, the crook'd finger of a disappearing showboat.

The psalmist thought the deep south a wonderful showboat
And to the animals he met in the shade
Said, "You are my melodies, and you are handsome."



Frank O'Hara

The Hunter

He set out and he kept hunting
and hunting. Where, he thought
and thought, is the real chamois?
and can I kill it where it is?
He had brought with him only a dish
of pears. The autumn wind soared
above the trails where the drops
of the chamois led him further.
The leaves dropped around him
like pie-plates. The stars fell
one by one into his eyes and burnt.

There is a geography which holds
its hands just so far from the breast
and pushes you away, crying so.
He went on to strange hills where
the stones were still warm from feet,
and then on and on. There were clouds
at his kness,his eyelashes
had grown thick from the colds,
as the fur of the bear does
in winter. Perhaps, he thought, I am
asleep, but he did not freeze to death.

There were little green needles
everywhere. And then manna fell.
He knew, above all, that he was now
approved, and his strength increased.
He saw the world below him, brilliant
as a floor, and steaming with gold,
with distance. There were occasionally
rifts in the cloud where the face
of a woman appeared, frowning. He
had gone higher. He wore ermine.
He thought, why did I come? and then,
I have come to rule! The chamois came.

The chamois found him and they came
in droves to humiliate him. Alone,
in the clouds, he was humiliated.

Hatred

I have a terrible age and I part
my name at the seams of the beast
in a country of robbers who prepare meals
for a velvet church green with stammerers
and with cuckoos, with cormorants and cranes.

I've tucked the rushing earth under my legs
so I won't have to turn my back on Sundays
and the morasses of ritual archers milking,
and I eat in a prison of bread and mortar,
I eat the stuff with the wooden provocations.

But if I'd broken you one of my wings,
shaft darkening over the prairie of your soul,
for the sea's split resistance I'd never snout.
I'd retch up all men. I would give
up America and her twenty twistings of my years.

The footsteps and suspirations of a twig!
and these given me by ransom. America
watches at the feet of my ramparting brow
and in a three thousand of years of brutes
will violate the wistful sphinx of my self

beneath an arch, latched onto poles
like the doors of comrades forced wide open
to the lost wind of a night on its back
supping whatever free entrails. Hounds,
the drab chefs, the menacing drones and icemen

who whirl towards us with bleakest confidence,
I have hounded myself out of the coral mountains
when my flesh quivered controllably upwards
into the chimneys of a black horde
which were the liberty to work beautifully.

I hounded and hounded into being born
my own death and the death of my country
at the stick, aloft and articulate,
so that the wry words of prophetic ravens
recognized themselves in clutching my wounds

and instantly died as I have wished to be dead
lately. For the delivery of the ensign
upon the painless body which is an island
I alone accept the blue breath of princes, for I
have done it. Am General and Ghost.

I have prized those days most dolefully
which saw me able to disrobe in the savage foam
of spears not polished to celebrate marriages.
I have never feared to suck out the soldier's brag
and so return to cadavers resuscitated on other shores

where war and its raptures is the only light,
and more dire than sisters. I don't wish to tear
the Chinese or their dogs into an intellectual smile,
nor does catching the ripe gules of enemy crossfire
upon my eyelashes signify Life in Death to me,

not when the corpses still circle my sweating front
like laurel. There are millions who'd like to see
that they meet the elderly dead in noisy churches
throughout a land that famine wooed garretless:
for these I paint the signs of the rounds of the latrines.

Two by two. They love Force while still hooked
otherward like two flies in a breeze, but let that other
pace the sheep and incense of a streetcorner on night
and they all go down, beneath dust-flower quilts
where the chosen homeland sweats and feels no winds.

But the war. How shall it claw me up?
and rip America sideways into pieces and shreds of blood.
The warriors clash into their gin-like fusillades
and are asleep before any thin arms entwine them,
having betrayed the numbers but never blabbed.

All! I cry who am all
where the plain bee on my body farms out gold,
do not wish my brittle bones to be dough on the tooth
held like a cleft palate in a bus of silver
by lame emigrants who do not love to go further.

I have resisted my comrades and their parties.
The general reunion called "Kindertoten" and "Jadis"
I'd use as a bomb to salve the voters who read
that youth, that age must rest on the divine.
But where is the first acrobat, and a woman kneeling?

Parting, the sugar in my breast that's fatuous
in moving and in pushing on, who'll shout a name
where mankind is no longer drowning? Hatred itself
can find no railroads into that sublime country
and slavery will not just burst like a volcano.

Yet I hold myself to you. I have the jangling nerves
of legendary people who box each other's ears and if
it is a union of saxophones and harps and heroes
in me you may discover the gossamer draperies
of defecation and death, and a love for the ancient kings.

What delight tricks you into stripping down
like lousy children who give away their few books
avariciously, and find that all their friends are blind?
I am afraid your kisses, so bland, lean against garages
and are worn out in the white nights of superintendents.

The arrest of the poor struggles into posters
and I bleed through a pose of cautious elephant riding,
am caught in brambles fancy as myself as prisoner
of Chillon. It is against this self that I hasten
towards a higher malady in which you appear starred

as aspiration and regret. The world's years
of war turn like walls of bottles and strangled soldiers
in my breast. I speak of liberty as if a girl
had just been eaten by our tribe between two lumps
of flaming coal, sacrifice to the foibles of cannon.

They have shot up the Just and shunted them
past the falls up to the daisied cliff-dwellers
where I merit, against my will, the careerism of
an Apache. Those compromises in the form of a cross
blot from my face the bony verdure of the clouds

and with a vicarious red salute trailing away
into the image in snot of Christ I refrain
from the maize and the manly savors and tongues
that cry hollowing "Aurora" as I fall upon rocks,
hearing always the churches sinking onto the bored earth.

Herons and priests who do not wear guns or skirts
and who infiltrate drunkenly the pillows and barricades
of what were condemned as castles, how may oppression
strongly enough refuse to resign itself to breathing
the silence of the open air and the praised and the careless?

I have been hunted in the purple arms of a lover
whose twilight had been commanded me for the people's sake,
how ridiculous! and they hurled those first stones
which turned our sobs to plums and sank my head
upon the brown flower which is at once Sun and Eagle.

No revolutionary canticle broke the mist
of that casque, and somewhere like a starry curtain
we drifted towards the Outer, where new myths
lay gasping at our white vanquished languor.
As martyr I am able to whip the crowd into shape,

a coronet of renegades dangling gold in the sky
like fountains and arenas on which feasts the cruel azure
of the holiday immediately succeeding the comradeship
of battle, and the endless chants of fishermen
who are heavy with seining for pyramids and swallows

and find the destroyer like a palace in a nightmare
about anarchists. I shall forget forever America,
which was like a memory of an island massacre
in the black robes of my youthful fear of shadows.
So easily conquered by the black torrent of this knife.

Anne Bernays

LOVE IS A CIRCUS

Juggler

Juggler now,
Have me.
Throw, skipping, weave,
Toss, slippery-finger me.
It's a show,
Fine show.
Oh, liking it fine,
Flung to the musty top, over somersaulting,
I wing it, through your wrists.
Juggler, don't faint.

Clown

Now, clown,
Laugh me, your bouncing ball.
Sawdusted, crazy wonder
Whose hat peaks to goodness
Knows where.
Tear round the ring.
Hoist your crimson smile.
I sing praise to the crowd of frantic caper.
Clown, you are no joker.

Elephant

What is that on your face,
Deliberate master?
Will you deign
To shrug, saw, a kind stare
And bring yourself to take from thrusting hands?
Oh, I can sit and rock
Where brain and divinity meet in you,
Unlovely, slow-motioning fakir.
Elephant, only heroical movements
Relieve your facial comedy.

Barker

Barker, you're
Astounding me nightly.
With a lightning-
Fast, jabber-jabber,
Con-man, spilt
Rhythm.
But, hearing you,
I believe —
You got me in. Now,
Where's the prize?

V. R. Lang

DUMMY IN THE CROWD

Tumblers and performers of a very little fate —
Might have forgiven him (for all he did was stare at us!)
Had he but acknowledged us, sadly, his complicity;
We only asked he *suffer* that complicity.

We were his *family*, and wept for disavowal;
He stood outside the ring in proud disguise, he masked
As audience. He might at least have clapped his hands,
Applauding us, acclaimed our dance in bottle green!
But he who danced for no one clapped his hands at nothing —
Oh, by his scorn of us he orphaned us to shame!
The children grew distorted in his glance, the women plain,
And all of our pleasant antics seemed ridiculous;
Even our marching animals seemed ridiculous.

There were those of us who hated him, and disappointed children,
And we did not forgive him, who betrayed us by denial,
Whose mockery was immobility throughout our Grand Performance;
But had we seen the child take aim we surely should have stopped him,
The child, the murderer, who delivered us, who shot him,
Who severed head from neck with sprung cork of his pop gun.
Oh, when we knew, we flew, we flew to him with pity in our eyes,
To find he was not real at all, but bound to joint with wires!

We bade him rest, and stood about in strong variety,
Sad in our bright parade of pantaloons, of colored hose —
And all of the leaning curious, the paint concealing
The wonder on our faces, bent to look at him.
Then where there would have been (from children) laughter,
The elders of us scolded us severely, saying:
Let his assassin weep for him, let melancholy women
Fold on his sawdust heart his hands, by his paper sword.

Elise Asher

Circus Casualty

Suddenly those eyes floating upward
To greet the feat of the performer
Whose winged weight defied the odds, O crazed angel,
Popped like balloons into a surprised vapour
As the faulty wire looped, broke,
Crashing to the floor together
Wire and wings all at once turned human;
Magic snipped with a magic fact
Too absurd to be believable.
Monstrous joke, mutely testified
On the faces of those entering — perched on solemn
Linked elephants whose trained tact
Formed a wall of dusty wrinkled hide
Round the hastily swept-up act.

And yet and yet, O crazed angel,
While you strode your ceiling height,
Having drawn yourself up on pale pulleys
Of a mysteriously willful creation
And hoisting with you the unfurled night
Like a bucket of mirage-water or mind's moon
With only the will as cue: the small gala prediction
That had leapt up doggedly of its own conception,—
Along with you we too charmed
Ourselves to your charm's limit:
The instant of the quick catastrophe
When we estranged you
And shifted to another planet
As the horseshoe halos reappeared above our heads.

Some call this hope.
Others call it blindness.
Both — yet neither is the whole,
— Rather the epitome of kindness:
God's grace in man, His prize charity
Which like some dark flower
Stands within man's cave of brooding
Pointing velvet scorn
At the foreboding walls.

Anne Ryan

She Was Divorced

She was divorced.

The bitterness, the dim expectancy that he might return, the strange want of him had passed. Months had passed. When she woke now the disgust of life, the uselessness, the great fear she felt lessened and she grew calmer. Always somewhere in the maze of her thoughts he still walked and continued to move as if they were in a house without doors and he was leaving, leaving. She must endure it, put up with it, and struggle into some kind of quiet. She had no interest left, no children, no youth, only the deep hidden prison of her mind to wander in.

"You must go away, Margaret," her friend said. The classical remedy ,the easy solution for friends. It was autumn and they were standing under the maples in the driveway where the full gold of the leaves flew up into the sky as the gusts swept. "Before the cold weather starts you should travel . . . find a new scene and new faces . . . in a year it will not be so hard to come back. You will long for your home again." The poignant word "home" was meaningless, stamped out. As she stood there she looked around at the shadows. The slanting lawn stretched away from the gabled Victorian house which had been her mother's and afterwards hers. Paths led to the arbor, to the dovecote and further back to the old-fashioned stable where the cars were kept.

"I will go to some big city," she said, "to Paris, perhaps, because I know it so well . . . Pack up and go where I can't come back easily."

"Yes," said her friend, "you can really get away if you go as far as Paris. Once you are settled you can rent a good piano and have all the music you want . . . It's so easy there."

The thought of music was a quick stab of memory to Margaret. It had been the positive link between Cuppy and her. It was the link, yet the scissors too, for it cut at last what bound them together as nothing else had after so many years. Sometimes she thought that music was the only thin thread left between them. Yet gradually she could see where the music was leading to. How many times had some strong, exciting sonata been the beginning of a feminine interest for Cuppy! He was a philanderer who easily looked into a woman's eyes over a keyboard and his gaiety and good manners awakened the rest. Even the young lawyers in his firm loved evenings at his house. Their starved days were rewarded, made up for as soon as they sat down to the piano and they were carried away by performing so well themselves. Here was encouragement and applause which was worth-while, and from a man who in his youth had studied law at Salamanca and music in Germany. Cuppy impressed them, gave them the feeling that richness for a whole life was in their fingers, in their music. He showed them how to practice, what to do, and they remembered eagerly the next day when they had a free evening hour. Nothing seemed so important to them as to be as accomplished as he was; he was the example, John Cupland Quint, the brilliant lawyer, the good musician.

It was decided that the day she talked under the trees with her friend that she would rent the house at once — better to have it used than standing idle all winter. The packing and storing of her fragile treasures completely filled her days. She hurried about the house deciding what should be left out and what hidden away. It was like tearing up in little pieces the whole order of the rooms. What furniture she left looked different, spread out, worn and even tawrdy and the pleasant fullness of life was gone and all the familiar comfort. The usual scene was over and the more she ripped up and threw out, the more stale she felt; deadened. Perhaps she could begin again somewhere but what real new life comes at fifty-eight? No, there is only descent and more and more silence. The business of dealing with tenants, agents and last bills left her too exhausted for memories. She was competent but there were a hundred tasks which were neglected until it was too late. Now it was over and another family was in her house.

Margaret sat in her hotel room waiting and restless. She had days to fill before the ship sailed. She thought she would go back to see the house again; it would be logical and natural. Once more . . . once more . . . before she put the ocean between her and her own lawns and gables. She did not stop to analyze the panic or the deep loneliness, just got in her car and drove along the familiar roads. Even as she entered the gate she saw it was suddenly different; toys were on the gravel driveway, a boy's bicycle-truck gleaming red and yellow and a doll sitting up with its arms stretched out. She passed carefully, slowly and did not touch the toys and came to the wide part in the drive outside the house without any ruin. It was peculiar to see a stranger on the porch teetering on the swing behind the storm windows. A woman was in there in a coarse, flowered wrapper with a glass in her hand, smiling and showing her broad teeth. Who was she? "Oh, Mrs. Curtis!"

The woman laughed. "Didn't you recognize me?" She came to the porch door and opened it a little.

Margaret smiled thinly. "You look different," she said. Indeed she did. She was another person than the smartly dressed one Margaret had seen in the agent's office.

Children romped and screamed in the house behind her.

"Do you want something. Did you forget something?" asked Mrs. Curtis.

"No, no, it's all settled. Everything is all right." Margaret had not gotten out of the car. "You don't mind if I sit here for a while, do you?"

A blank look came into the woman's face. "Not at all," she said, and Margaret felt that the last thing she wanted was to be looked at, appraised and measured so she closed the door of the car gently. There was no dull fury in her thoughts, only disappointment and loss. She saw everything between two thicknesses of glass, behind the glass of the porch and through the glass of the car. She was doubly shut away. Then she moved down the roadway slowly until she came to the barn, and sat there thinking.

It was after their middle years that Margaret noticed a difference in Cuppy. He was safe and secure in his profession, really established. He grew gayer, more social and lively until it seemed to her that he showed off. He was attractive to everyone. She was older than he was and she suddenly felt too tired to keep up with him. He was in demand, the eternal youth, the eternal buoyant spirit going about with friends to musical evenings, night clubs and the theater. That youth was what everyone wanted to be near and to imitate. Time after time in winter, when he asked her to go dancing with them, she was satisfied not to have to, but chose to stay in the silence of the house at night. She was actually getting old, thinner, quiet, while a new upsurging tore at Cuppy.

She always knew when he was attracted to a pretty woman for she had to suffer for it at night. In this awful side of him he was indulging in one of the most hideous acts of life, a vicarious love-making, impersonal and brutal. It had nothing to do with her at all. She lay awake tense and listening for him for hours and it grew very late. Then when she was just dozing at last, he made a great noise as he opened the front door, threw it back violently, slammed it and bolted it and rushed up the stairs. She was crying with shame and fear as she cringed away. "Don't . . . don't . . ." How could she stand it? How could she go through another night like that? And she felt every time that it was not her, his wife Margaret, whom he wanted. He sought other eyes, lips, arms unknown to her. Afterwards when she was trembling, when her breath came in sobs, the pity of it was overwhelming. This was the lover, but not for her; this was the husband, but lost, lost and gone forever. Only one solution, one course to take, divorce.

The disgrace of divorce, the exposure in court, every word written down, every word listened to, she must go through that. She surely had every reason, tense and horrible reasons which would never be revealed, no matter what whip was in the questions.

She knew that in a divorce court there was always heard the same dried up words over and over, adultery, desertion and the rest, but the real cause, the hidden, the dismal and secret cause never got into the record and no one knew about it, or even wanted to.

A night later she found Cuppy on the screened porch kissing her neighbor. He had kissed many others but this was the first time she had been able to stand in her own doorway and watch. It was ludicrous because she was sure this neighbor was not the one he wanted and she almost laughed at them, but she only slipped back into the dark house.

The next afternoon she got the car out of the stable and went down to the city to talk to her mother's lawyer. She told Cuppy at once what she had done and was tender with him and did not ask him to go away. He was quiet with regret and remorse for the next few days. He really did not want such a drastic change. The old groove was too easy, the pattern too familiar to alter.

Margaret thought, "I can't put him out like a cat . . . and I shall be alone if I do . . ." She was weakening. "Perhaps he can't help himself . . . perhaps it's a bad year for him that I know nothing about." She would have taken him back, wavering as she was between memory and horror of those times he stamped upstairs.

He was foolish enough to neglect her, went out without saying a word. Everything was spoiled; the great store and fund of each other's likes and dislikes and all the feeling of good was over. Complete upset and anxiety grew day by day between them. Well, let them die to each other, let them finish. The force of her disgust and her despair made her act. The court day came. His lawyer friends covered up for him easily, and there were only a few lines in the evening paper.

When two have had the same bed, the same table and roof and many years behind them checkered with happiness or unhappiness, the words of a judge seem very small. The blaze of the day in court dies out and bitterness falls back into darkness. At first, only monotonous and strange days stretched ahead for Margaret, veered out in a far ascending arc she could not see the end of. But now she felt, sitting there in the driveway, that she never could be interested again in any place or person, no matter what Paris she lived in, or what music she heard or whose voice spoke to her. A certain kind of death had come and in these moments without sound there was no sense of time, no backwards or forwards of shadows, no hands to the clock. Wrapped and lost, her sorrow loomed over her and time was still.

Gerrit Lansing

THE CASTLE OF FLOWERING BIRDS

Fancy in the mind
The graceful flaunters of the summer air
Arise like flowers from their sea,
Their bodies bronze and fledged in blue,
Uniforms that music wears
When most she is herself, not sound
Only, but fugitive and sly,
The fox occult among the grapes,
Anonymous in summer's horn.
Brilliant beyond a self, the birds
Are dumb with feeling, an afternoon
Of wings. The company of love,
Safe in the garden that is themselves,
More ghost than garden, more brute than bird,
Acclaim the throbbing animal.
The beastly petals green with blood.

HISTORY

It is a revolver like love
But more dignified; a foreign affair;
The wide-eyed lady lying in wait;
The asylum looking so like a garden
It fairly takes you in.

It is the fanciest hotel,
Delicatessen and sumptuous source,
Appointed with parks and pianos, pleasures
Endowed with appropriate vistas,
Fresh exhibitions in all the rooms,
And such far-fetched flambeaux. At night
Each guest discovers in bed a boon,
A real surprise package, a promise
Brightly wreathed like a dream-boat . . .

But in the dark beneath your pillow
Something lives and moves and has its being.

It's awkward to open the package,
Glimpse an unsuitable nightmare,
At your shoulder the dear smiling giver.
What you can't expect from the past
Are the trappings of the spring,
Gowns to wear at the sun's reception
Or to meet the filmy negligence of rain . . .
One might wish for other hands,
For opalescent crosses,
For a creamier solution,
But not for this . . .

In the casino the black *chanteuse:*

'Le plaisir passe
Il me dépasse . . .'

Kenneth Koch

JANUARY NINETEENTH

1

Houses do not fail to sing in a ghostly way among themselves.
"I felt foolish in the fishmarket of white horses." "She hands me the pleasant nucleus."
"The French parliament have grouped themselves around silence." Yes, the houses sing!
"The ear hates myself in the wintry pus flag of oar-telephones!" Wintry lake!
Bassinets leak through the covers of ice-dripping magazines
Of Clark Bar kindness, in the midst of Romeo My Telegraph Street. Like a wheel of cigars
Unfinished by Perseus, the coconut bra parts with chilblains
The unbanished sidewalk, where secret members of the Tear walk. O boisterousness!
"She wears a tiara of idleness, she has cocoa on her chair-bonnet;
Each of her children is worth sixteen dollars a million, her hat is in Nebraska;
Her feet are in South Fort Worth, Texas, and the ale manufacturers
Are agreed to cut criss-crosses in green upon the lilac statue of her milliner —"
So — "my strength!"
"The cheerleaders have penciled the bathtubs with the words 'Maine State'
So as not to be bothered by her prettiness, her booths have become a sidewalk, her eyes a dove
On the cover of Plinth Magazine, and her groceries the weather
In red and green; the weather is costly and marvelous!" The shoe slips, and the eye comes, off,
But the basket of circuses is still free on the arm of the sanctified circus deliverer
With sixty necks, whose swift speeches cancel our leaves for seventy weeks.
"Bakery of coffee gloves!
Oh Lorna Doone fizzled the dazzling icicle-pencil
By sheer blue shirts." My hill! "Let's turn to the pathway of potatoes!"

2

Buttes-Chaumont pleased Aragon; the fire department say, "Flint is our religion."
The bone Andes are still pledging facial Switzerland to Peruvian intestinal prisms
Too coffee-like to replace the face; but then that tissue paper is their business. Our replica
Of all this is the sunset, a basilica of friendly brassieres —
The government of Switzerland may not be overcome by gonorrhea!
Finland wants "boats." The sheep want to go to Finland.
"Sand will not make you a very thrilling overcoat," the house said to me;
Our peach tree sat down. "Chalk was dreaming of the lightning and thunder."

The hilt of the swords! the hilt of the swords!
The sheep tree, the lightning and thunder!
Powder writes another novel to itself:
Passengers, adroit pyramids, and blue triremes!
Oh how I hate to "Gogol"! Now, baby sweater!
The Green Cab Sighs have fallen in love.

PLANTATION DAYS

1

The moon is preceded by shadows.
I suppose so.
But how pleasing it is to look out the window at the forms.

2

The hay-mow and the hay-rick stand in placid beauty
Like celestial cows! Oh lend me a shotgun
For I am sick at heart.

3

I remember, Jennyward Bryson,
When my will broke through
How we lay like celestial cows, made sick by the heat!

4

And how pleasing it is!
When day is over and the steamboat
Whistles its arrears, to shuffle a deck of cards.

5

The moon is preceded by shadows
And the cows are dead on the cards,
I have seen their images there!

6

Old men of Mississippi!
You too remember Miss Jennyward
When she walked through the snow in her pyjamas!

7

Mysterious south! the moon
Is preceded by foam,
Shaking with memory's precision.

8

At last,
Can we say which harmony is dead
Because the trees are so full
Of apples? for a wolf steals each lemon.

I remember Miss Jennyward standing, from far, and in close.

Eugene Walter

SINGERIE — SONGERIE

A MASQUE, on the subject of LYRIC MODE

in honor of Ruth Pitter, Jean Garrigue, José Garcia Villa,
George Herriman, Donald Ashwander, Ruth Herschberger,
Harpo Marx, Wanda Landowska, F. T. Prince,
Butterfly McQueen, Richard Wilbur, and Diana Adams.

THE PERSONNAGES

HENRY HOWARD, the Earl of Surrey, on a White Horse.

PHOENIX, afterwards a SORCERESS. First seen as a Golden Bird with Stomacher of Live Coals, then transformed to Sorceress with chevelure of jeweled serpents, and Necklace of Glowworms.

FOUR WHITE MONKEYS, with Lutes, costumed as the Four Winds.

POLLNONE, a Chancellor, a Fuddy-Duddy.

TEASE, his Son, afterwards Golden and Invisible.

VERDINE, his Daughter, after a Willow-tree, then herself.

AMULET, the Prize of Dark-Night, afterwards Divided.

QUEEN GARE-DU-NORD, his Mother.

THE UNCLE AND KING.

FORTUNE, a Sad Fool. The front of his habit is bright, but the Back is Black with a Skeleton outlined. He carries a dead white rose, and a phosphorescent white bone.

CAPRIOL, a True Fool. He wears particolor, and carries the usual gilded pig-bladders.

GUARDER.

GUARDEE.

ALSO, certain WHITE MONKEYS, HUSSAR MONKEYS, HOWLERS, LESSER NOBILITY, TORCH-BEARERS, FABULOUS BIRDS, MUSICIANS, DANCERS, etc., etc. and etc.

THE TABLEAUX

I. A Green Place, with a View of Byzantine Empire, by Moonlight.

II. Snowy Parapets giving onto a Northern Sea.

III. A Tapestried Hall.

IV. An Exceedingly Baroque Boudoir.

V. Another Part of the Parapets.

VI. In a Green Grove. View of Towers from the Tres Riches Heures.

VII. An Endless Corridor.

VIII. The Green Grove.

IX. Ballroom of the Palace. This becomes, in the APOTHEOSIS, an Island in Midair.

It is important to visualize the action of this Masque as you read it. In doing so, consider the Costumes as being fanciful as you please, but always defining the characters precisely: the Four Winds will have Bellows and Wings, the King and Queen exaggerated crowns, etc.

Prologue

FANFARE. The PHOENIX appears on an Eminence, in a prospect of leaves and flowers. She claps her wings, and speaks. Mysterious music sounds.

Hesitating ever to be the cause
Of a dampened haze on Lyric's mirror
The frangible Author of this Masque,
(Addressed complimentary to Lyric's
Children) begs it now be known by all
'Twas intended as Essay Liter'ry
Encrusted with Footnotes and Grave Eclectics;
Till that Amphion and Thespis came,
Bucko in Buskins and Silly in Socks,
Saying: "For the Rose-Gardener, Roses;
For the Soil Analyst, Slugs and Bone-Meal:
For all Sweets their equal or opposite,
Never their adjuncts; this makes commonplace."
So blame it on the Sunspots,
Blame it on the Sunspots,

O blame it on the Sunspots, if you've a Will.

First Tableau

A Green Place. At the back, a view of the Byzantine Empire by Moonlight. Center-stage, Henry Howard on his White Horse. Four White Monkeys with Lutes, costumed as the Four Winds, accompany his song.

HENRY HOWARD:

Delight is the cap
Fits square on my head.
Doff I it only
Where Heroes have bled.

Delight is the shoe
Makes pointed my toe;
No shadow of motion,
No tracks on the snow.

Ineffable tinglings
Inhabit my spine.
Time wears my livery;
World's triply mine.

Delight's a white ferret
To match my white hand;
Delight is for Howard,
No Clown's contraband.

When red blood is dancing
Then blue blood has frowned;
Level the sugar-scales,
Globe must go round.

The sorrel that sings
In a high yellow key
Shall my silent-sweet
Brightest equerry be.

For while Henry Howard
Is clothed in delight,
All day shall be noontide,
And outlawed the night.

You honey-bee Death,
Sweet stinger, sweet foe,
Walk behind, little usher,
When Henry must go.

The MONKEYS bow out, to the four corners of the stage. Enter POLLNONE with a ladder; he mounts it, to bind a black cloth around the face of HENRY HOWARD.

FORTUNE and CAPRIOL enter duelling with peacock feathers. They shout.

FORTUNE: No!
CAPRIOL: Perhaps!
FORTUNE: Yes!
CAPRIOL: Maybe!
FORTUNE: The ganglia!
CAPRIOL: The heart!
FORTUNE: The moon!
CAPRIOL: But not alone: with sun, and sundry shooting stars!

(CAPRIOL triumphs)

FORTUNE: O! you've put out my eyes with commas,
You've drawn my blood with semi-colons.
Cypress, sad cypress, cypress.

CAPRIOL: Ten thousand field flowers, two dozen lions,
And a mouse's ear wrought in gold!

POLLNONE: *(assisting FORTUNE)*
The Footnotes will help him walk,
In Bibliography else hide;
Draw pension in Appendix,
Or like a lighthouse-keeper,
Dwell in Epigraph. Time flies.

Second Tableau

Snowy crennellated parapets, overlooking a cold sea. In the sky, the Northern Lights. GUARDER, GUARDEE, and AMULET, a caricature of Romantic Melancholy. Strange music, cries of night-birds.

AMULET: Grey is the spell that winter flings
About my heart and home.
Coldness sifted into light makes cold light
And cold light makes cold corners in greyness:
Nothing so bright as one snowbird
Dare sing here. No fish are caught
Who serve forth jewels when to table brought;
No sweet news in sea-borne bottles found.
Why must the Sun go travelling?

GUARDER: Spring reveals all, I'm told that wheat
From graves in Egypt has been made to sprout.

(a cold greenish light seen)

GUARDEE: O look it comes again,
That Frosty-fingered Muse from nowhere,
No air so plaintive, no ruse.

AMULET: It reckons. I'm fallow.
What would thou, spirit?
Knock wood, thou spirit!
Break wood, bowsprit!
Sink all!

(goes out, following light)

Offstage music heard. Voices, laughter, cupclinks.

GUARDER: Tonight the King keeps vassal and
The drownded Caroussel will sing.
Tell me, who is that person with the black eyes?

GUARDEE: O Love will shift its meaning,
O Love will thrift its gleaning,
There are more ghosts than one.
My ghost is not your ghost,
So whose ghost may this be?
Your ghost would come in garlands,
My ghost in velvet walk. What do you say?

GUARDER: Love's a dark edifice, but I have entered there:
The house cannot stand long.

AMULET returns, moody. THE GHOST appears and says to him:

GHOST: When I tear the Sun from his socket
And rearrange the Stars in rows,
Cause the limpid sea to blacken and churn,
Casting up green goblins on prosaic shores —
When you behold me, on a moonless night,
Clad in ire and white fire, oh then,
Then indeed you shall be very sorry
You were not listening when I spoke.

(Ghostly fanfare, rattling of bows on fiddle-backs, etc. He vanishes.)

Third Tableau

A mouldy hall, dark, tapestried. VERDINE embroiders.

VERDINE: My dollies' names are Love and Death,
I sing them with a honeyed breath.
The stars will fall; the sky will claim
To be quite empty of the same.
The needle seeks the web to pick out there
New bestiaries to cloak such walls as these,
Feed moths, and hide spiders.
Farther Deer, err you there?

POLLNONE: *(behind arras)*
Down-a-down-a-down, down-a-down-a-down.

VERDINE: O too paternal tapestry! But here stalks Amulet.
Hot tot, my lewd?

AMULET: Nymph, in thy garrisons re-ember Amulet.

POLLNONE: Down-a-down-a-down.

AMULET: Who's there?

VERDINE: Further Time, he watches us.

AMULET: Falser Rime, he blesses us.

(Cuffs her. She cries.)

They are separated by a PARADE of HUSSAR MONKEYS, who pass, with golden trumpets, and pennoncels. AMULET is swept along. When she is alone VERDINE plucks the strings of her embroidery frame, which harplike furnish the accompaniment to her song.

VERDINE: Love is a Bird
Caught in Time's chimney,
Wanting the fire
And wanting the sky.
Who am I?
Want is a love
Caught in Bird's trembling,
Dieting the tryer
On honey and rue.
Who are you?

Fourth Tableau

The boudoir of Queen Gare-du-Nord, very baroque.

QUEEN: Mirror, morrow, on the wall . . .

Enter AMULET, very untidy.

QUEEN: O Prize Amulet, what a state you're in. Wipe your nasty nose. No, not on the arras, not on your life! Give me back my hairpins, I saw you take them.

AMULET: Kill a cat and lose a tailor.

QUEEN: In a minute.

AMULET: Lose a tailor, gain a hat,
Crush a hat, find a sailor,
Then tit for tat.
Where were you when the black dog
Danced alone in the moonlight?

QUEEN: Ah, then I was hidden behind my frame of reference.

AMULET: Where when Diana pinched Endymion's ear?

QUEEN: I was consulting the horn of a favorite dilemma.

AMULET: And at daybreak?

QUEEN: Well, then I was construing the song of a favorite duenna.

AMULET: I know about you and uncle . . .

QUEEN: Were there many people there?

AMULET: Debutantes, trepidants, Immy Kants.

QUEEN: How do you carry on! If your Uncle Icarus or your Brother Narcisse had lived you'd be a different boy, that's the Bawd's Truth, and you know it.

POLLNONE: *(arrassed)* O Truth is a dead refugee!

AMULET: Amat! Amat! Did for a fortnight, did! *(Kills him)*

QUEEN: Down he pulls my portieres, next he'll chip the
Chippendale, lower the Lowestoft; then I fear he'll
blood the high-blooded — I see him drawn to the deed,
as pain to the poultice will pull . . . and will pull . . .
Ohimé!

SONG

(ALL, Pollnone from recumbent position)

Love, do not stress
To name
Those you bless.
Love, be politic —
List sick
And lost and lame.
The Golden Bees
Are loyal
In heat or freeze
To hive and comb
But only Queen alone
Can make them Royal.

QUEEN: Mirror, morrow, on the wall . . .

Fifth Tableau

CAPRIOL, with a lantern, like a Will-o-the-Wisp, draws Amulet about the parapets, leaves him stranded in darkness.

AMULET: My green coat is named O'Kelly, it eats soot, and drinks sea-wind, and sleeps standing up, like an ibis. The ibis wakes to fly to Africa, but I may not fly. But I may wake. And shall I then remember what the dim wraith said? My handkerchief reminds me ever so much of a hammock. O, the sleepy owl, the sleepy, sleepy owl . . .

BALLET of WHITE MONKEYS carrying tiny lights. They pinch AMULET and dance around him. CAPRIOL plays a minstrel's harp.

AMULET: The Sun will rise in Africa, but my heart rises in a colden clime . . .

Sixth Tableau

In a Green Grove. VERDINE, dancing with garlands, and singing to herself, against the sound of birds. Through the branches are seen splendid white towers and turrets.

VERDINE: Fa-la-la! La!
Fol-de-roldo, fol-de-roldo,
Upstairs and down.
Turn a round widdershin
All through the town.
Then when you've turned them,
Turn again home:
For widdershin's a widdershin
In Paris or Rome.

Ah, I must rue my wares with a difference.

UNCLE-KING appears and chases her. She calls for AMULET, who appears and kisses her. At his kiss, she turns into a WILLOW TREE, full of singing brds.

AMULET: O!
UNCLE-KING: O!

They run in opposite directions.

Seventh Tableau

An endless corridor. HUSSAR MONKEYS in attendance.

UNCLE-KING: Your ear, young man!
TEASE: What about my ear?
UNCLE-KING: Why your pretty skull's about it, and that
I'd never harm; Time will attend that duty.
TEASE: I know you for an Ear-Specialist: what would
you pour in mine?
UNCLE-KING: Ears obsess me. Often I dream the world is a
huge Ear and that I'm falling into it, black
and haunted, to strangle in all the Music
clotted there. But I would give you news of
Verdine . . . there is a Willow grows aslant a
brook . . .
TEASE: O irremediable metamorphosed she! I knew it!
Poor soul, she's lascivious.
UNCLE-KING: O you have mis-scanned her then!
But I have heard her with the Ear of Time.
TEASE: O! O!

Eighth Tableau

The Green Grove again. TEASE and AMULET picnic under the WILLOW.

TEASE: Clever boy, clever boy,
Where's your heart, where's your heart?
AMULET: Why, it's in safe-deposit,
For fear that I should lose it.
TEASE: Clever boy, clever boy,
Where's your laugh, where's your laugh?
AMULET: Why, I have tossed it far apace,
For fear to crack my careful face.
TEASE: Clever boy, clever boy,
Can you sing, will you sing?
AMULET: No, but songs of any date
I can brightly explicate.
TEASE: What a gem, what a joy!
PHOENIX: *(in tree)* Ever-so-clever boy!
TEASE: Clever boy, clever boy,
Can you dance, will you dance?
AMULET: I'll not engage in ethnic glee,
But pat my foot advisedly.
TEASE: Clever boy, clever boy,
Can you cry, can you cry?
AMULET: I will not crystallize my woe
But down will turn my mouth, so.
TEASE: Clever boy, clever boy,
Drink with me, roister some?

AMULET: I must conceal exuberance,
And court a chilly elegance.

TEASE: *(drinking from a horn cup)*
O you are winter's wonderchild,
Edelweiss on glacier wild.

WILLOWTREE: Clever boy, clever boy!

PHOENIX: But ever-so-never boy!

UNCLE-KING IS REVEALED downstage left, spying on Picnic. QUEEN IS REVEALED downstage right, studying her face in a hand-mirror, oblivious to all else. TEASE & AMULET prepare to break a wishbone, but PHOENIX flies across and snatches it, takes it to QUEEN who absentmindedly sticks it in her hair. TEASE & AMULET quarrel, in dumbshow, each thinking other has the Wishbone. Exit fighting. PHOENIX takes Wishbone, gives it again to Queen who again mistakes it for hairpin. PHOENIX proffers it a third time, but holds one half, leads QUEEN by it to WILLOW, points, whispers.

QUEEN: Poor girl, how changed, how changed!
O, yes how she is changed. Quite green.
I had thought to use your sweet eyes for mirrors,
Since autumnal mists have hazed all glasses here,
But la, maiden, I did never think to sit in your shade.

PHOENIX: *(a musical cry)* O! Aaaaaaa!

WILLOWTREE: Wit or will or willow,
Time's a pretty pillow
To cushion distress.
Though birds sing dirge or roundel
The sorrel and the groundsel
Have their own tenderness.

BIRDS: To wit! To willow! Poor Will!

THE QUEEN weeps. CAPRIOL appears and sings to his harp.

CAPRIOL: Death, the sooty satyr,
Rapes all, reaps all,
Death, the sooty sweeper,
Sweeps us all away.
So counterpoise nonino,
Winecup, fiddlestring,
And fun in a haystack
Gainst his lullay.
Lulli-loo-la, loolay.

Ninth Tableau

Ballroom with lustres and mirrors. Procession of TORCHBEARERS and MUSICIANS.

GRAND COTILLION of MONKEYS, BIRDS & NOBLES, led by PHOENIX. In the second figure of the cotillion, a POLONAISE, she steps to the front and sings:

POLONAISE

PHOENIX: Eagerly meagerly humble pie
May help the hurt, but ruin the eye,
For it's douse the light and hope to die
Eagerly meagerly humble pie.

In the third figure of the cotillion, a White Poodle in ruffles, twirling a parasol, sings the WALTZ.

WALTZ

POODLE: My corpuscles are waltzing,
The red ones with the white,
I shall not be a-sleeping
The whole of this night.
O the waltz! O the schmaltz! Bow-wow-wow-wow!
My corpuscles are waltzing,
The white ones with the red:
The ball will not be over
Until I fall down dead.
O delight! O gemutlichkeit! Bow-wow-wow-wow!

They all dance the waltz the last few bars.
The next figure is the Grand Cakewalk, sung by CHORUS OF MONKEYS.

CAKEWALK

MONKEYS: For Pristine Pearly is my sweetheart,
For Pristine is,
For Pristine Pearly,
For Pristine is,
For Pristine Pearly,
Pristine sweet or Pristine surly,
Pristine suave or Pristine curly,
Pristine late and Pristine early,
She's Pearly, Pearly, and my sweetheart.

Enter TEASE & AMULET DUELLING.

PHOENIX: Avoid! No more! Make a void! They're sore!
TEASE: Say you took my wishbone!
AMULET: Say forsooth my wishbone!
TEASE: Say you wished my bon-ton!
AMULET: Say you boned my wish, like a split cod!
TEASE: Say you've wounded, say you've wooed Death!
PHOENIX: Ha! He is here!

FANFARE

AMULET: What are those trumpets?
TEASE: Wound me, wound many.
AMULET: Wound me, wound all.
PHOENIX: All present, but unaccounted for! *(claps wings)*
AMULET: What wings, what wings are those?
TEASE: Why, Fortune's trumpets, but the Phoenix' wings.

FANFARE. Enter FORTUNE.

FORTUNE: Milords, the Players wait without.
When will your bout be a bout decided?

FANFARE. Mysterious MUSIC.

PHOENIX, with a cry, tosses off her skin, plumes, etc., is transformed into SORCERESS. Smoke and Roman-fire. She incants.

SORCERESS: Aaaaaaa! Eeeeeee! Unprecedented abundance
of illustrative material. Until. Until, maybe,
until, sometime, until, happily, we arrive at
the point of departure. Beauty Blush, Cherokee,
Herbert Hoover, Talisman, Mrs. Potter Palmer,
Marechal Niel. Yes, yes, feet of clay, they
bloom better that way. Aaaaaaa! Eeeeeee!

SORCERESS waves a Red Rose at TEASE: he becomes two people, himself Golden, and himself Invisible. She waves a White Rose at AMULET: he becomes two people, a BLACK PRINCE & a WHITE PRINCE. THE GOLDEN TEASE immediately kills the BLACK AMULET with a Soap-Bubble Pipe.

BLACK AMULET: We all are wounded, but the dark Amulet is dead. *(falls.)*

GOLDEN TEASE: His bubble's burst.

ENTER CAPRIOL.

CAPRIOL: Only the gentle eyelid, floppy-folded,
Serves to armor illuminated self.
We love whereon we look,
And everywhere we look our look entangles
With Love barb'd or winged floating
Through this volatile world.

Only the adamant eyelid, salt-encrusted,
Closing at the cleverest moment
Of the cleverest scene, records forever
Just inside the lid, a negative
Pertinent image of the facts of love:
Love barb'd or winged floating
through this volatile world.

FANFARE. The body of the BLACK AMULET seems to divide into four, for the QUEEN, GHOST, UNCLE-KING, DEATH appear.

GHOST: *(removes wig, discloses POLLNONE)*
Toupée or not toupée! My death it was a drafty one.

QUEEN: **Au lit** or not **au lit!** My death will be a sassy one.

UNCLE-KING: Tokay or not tokay! My death will be a crafty one.

(he falls dead)

DEATH: Lullay or not lullay! My boast will be a deathly one.

GAVOTTE: CAPRIOL, FORTUNE, SORCERESS.

(They step over the bodies neatly)

WHITE AMULET: The Crown and Mace are yours,
The Rue and Ginger, too. *(Gives them to FORTUNE)*

GOLDEN TEASE: Crown me, crown many.

DUEL between TEASE & FORTUNE. TEASE killed.

SORCERESS: *(knowingly)*
A belief in witches does not invalidate
A testamentary consigning properties.

SHE incants. VERDINE, marvelously clothed in white and pearls, her canopy borne by the FOUR WHITE MONKEYS, appears, comes forward.

SORCERESS: Let no recalcitrant castanet reprove our heroine
For her wit, her beauty, nor her infinite lassitude.

VERDINE yawns prettily. SORCERESS tranforms WHITE AMULET into a cushion. She strikes it.

CUSHION: Come, sit on me. *(VERDINE sits.)*

SORCERESS: Turning on a bright ambivalent axis
The rudiform heart will listen now
For crocus and locust and widowed sea-cow:
Carnal bereavement drunk on words.
The Lassitude Lady will croon to all
A sea-song folious.

VERDINE: Willing trilling!
Ooooo! Loo-loo-looooooooo!
Ah! Aaaaaa! O! O!

CHORUS: *(sotto voce)*
No, never knew till now;
Never, never knew till now. *(They bow to VERDINE.)*

Apotheosis

(This follows without break from scene preceding.)

TRANSFORMATION: The Ballroom disappears, and the bright night sky is seen: Moon, Stars, Comets. Cloudbank opens to reveal gold pavillion. VERDINE enthroned in triumph, surrounded by Beasts, Birds, Musicians, etc., as Courtiers.

CAPRIOL: O ambrosial Lady with heart-shaped fan,
Lust can never rust your tender tocket,
For you do swear by and wear
The Moon's face in your little locket.

CHORUS: For Pristine Pearly is my sweetheart, etc.

VERDINE: *(to Capriol)*
A rose-colored diamond
The size of a ringdove's egg.
With honor now to lions, and all gazelles.

She gives it to him, he touches it, it hatches, a Golden Bird flies out. Cheers. FANFARE. Grand March. EXEUNT OMNES save CAPRIOL AND FOUR MONKEYS AS THE FOUR WINDS. HE produces a bouquet of little golden bells, stands exact center of stage jingling them; while the FOUR MONKEYS, strumming their lutes, bow and exit out the four corners of the stage.

MONKEYS: *(a kind of solemn chord)*
In the windrose there is great repose.

FINIS

Walter Silver

Walter Silver

Daisy Aldan

Spring

We are leaning
toward the perpendicular shades
the trees make, greening
single spear of hyacinth
from earth hilt; we leave
the women talking secretly
to their dogs, feeding
pigeons whose names
are all Peter,
failure sleeping,
the dead creaking descent
into dark graves;
throw them our petals,
recover seeds; turning,
we devour the cakes
of sunlight on the lake
and move into 'I';
a lean line, thin high
wire, life quick light
ning, arrow in star flight
and a dot;
a dart, sharp and taut,
on tiptoe; a young poem,
slim spire of birch bark,
far sky bird,
exclamation mark!

Summer

Magician twilight
with tricks of transforming
turns Sete to fancy.
If a cane changes form,
becomes silks, and a flame
of flowers appears
on the empty table,
then rooftops below
are jeweled and triangular
blocks scattered by
the whim of a boy.
Walls of the chateau
are peeling mauve petals.
Twilight the alchemist
has Mediterranean draped
with a golden mist.
Pools are topaz, and
mirror cloud shapes.
Grape vines entwine
and lean. Town sounds
drone in a dream.
Clattering afternoon
melts lavender and amber.
Sudden hoarse laughter
softens in flight.
Hush lies with eucalyptus
leaves. A wing
humming hovers here.
Youth laughter lilts, lifts,
and necklaces all
in honey and velvet,
in violet and gold.

Anywhere

echo sleighbell songs of birds birdsong of rusty sleighbells rolling
over leather bluebells dandelions sunflowers milkweed
mingling hush hush of branches in sunwaves over leaf surface
weaving through sole old wagon wheels against a fence forever
arrested motion stopped stilled yet undead sleigh

over leaning broken swan necked sunflowers of petals dry
incurled bilious sibyls nesting in weeds sheening milkweed pods
burst open dropping seed small round and brown heads trailing floating
silken veils puffed forth to fly to land and breed

discs of sunlight glimmering yellowing mayflowering among
rungs criss crossing irridescent bobbing marbles strewing
wavering streams and winging light across dandelion hands
holding grey fans breath flinging forth furry parachuting
insubstantial insects stars somersaulting

milkweed brides snowing over sleigh of dulled red peeling runners
and the tinkling of the bluebells campanules birds sleighbells leaf stir
metal insect legs haggard old women heads honeycomb pod faces
ochry and ready to strew sunflowers

sunmist over shimmering aspen slick ivy pantaloons
of ash and I lying liquefying inhaling it is Autumn

snow

Animal house doors shut, black tree shadows drip,
balance, and strain wings of torn lace. Lone brooms sweep
the park. Snowmen dissolve outward. Ski slides descend,
dark trails curve and cross; toe tension; we ascend
airward, stark and winged; soar, sail, and drop,
whipping the air and tripping. Laughter muted
stammers, rattles like ice cubes. Polar tree
glistening, revolves into sky clarity.
Footprints form themselves into steps of the dead;
fragrance of dry leaves sickens; the dissonant flutes
are playing, and we are all turning to snow.

Arthur Gregor

THE MEATPACKER'S SON

He stampeded across New Mexico putting a
blindfold on each cowboy he came upon;
lured town and country dreamers to the
hunting grounds of a British munitions
salesman whose guest and friend he was,
at sunset overlooking canyons took them,
shot for doves. Whatever was done for him
was done exactly as he wanted it, for pay;
preferring it that way. He assured
his friends he was bored with sentiment,
but asked of them to understand
his case: He was blessed beneath a
native holy tree long before he could
see; in his hands held labelled, star-
packaged meat long before he could eat.

On occasion the police arrested him
but to his family expressed apologies.
From his candlelit windows on Quai Voltaire
he exhibited himself in a manner suitable
for Western heroes, late innocents
abroad; attracted beggars, English poets,
river crowds. In Rome he visited the dead,
paid enormous sums to professional guides
to hear statues shout, walked through
the catacombs dressed in pyjamas, holding a
shade for the sun, whistled a vulgar
burlesque tune on the grounds that he was
somewhat of a deity, at home looked on
as a sort of vestal virgin next to god:
the wealthy Chicago meatpacker's son.

At the break of day all across the water-
regions the nighthunters return
blowing on horn from boat to shore;
and just before noon the girls of Haiti
ascend natural terraces again
bearing jugs of water on their heads.
The Polynesian women gather mangoes for
their men and in the evening around fires
of fishbone make their bread; fed, they
dance in rhythmic, savage frenzy,
invoke their god or painted charmer to throw
his spells: food, fertility and health for
men and kin. But in New York the nation's
meatpacker's son enters the Oak Room
with nothing on and orders Holland Gin.

Reported missing are certain gunpacked
saloonboys from a Texas frontier town;
from those who vanished like Eurydice
in a surrealist's film comes word: God save Man;
but the press runs photos of him
testing the latest lightweight plane,
or dressed as an Arab in the desert hut
of a moviequeen asleep; while those
who sit starving at laid-out dinnersets
keep him saviourlike in mind and heart
hoping to rise at the remotest start of cars,
their meatpacking heir in his cadillac,
convinced they had nothing, and of it enough,
to follow the splendor of the cult and shed
at last the first and purest touch of love.

Ruth L. Yorck

THIS JOE SOMEBODY

They go forward and never move their feet. That is what makes them different; that is how they can be recognized easily. They hold their feet silently together. They do not float, there is nothing cloudy about them; they carry themselves erect, not pride bound, just stiffly.

They scarcely ever run in packs. Occasionally they come in single file, maybe without end, but mostly they are all alone and lonely and in solitude. Their eyes make their faces look empty, searching and sucking, dangerously vacuous. Of course being visible means they try to get in touch with somebody alive.

This Joe Somebody had been engaged to be married to a certain Jane and lost his fiancee in a skiing accident. They never found her; she was left behind in the snow at an uncertain address, irretrievable. This Joe could not be consoled; never. She had kissed him only twice before she got lost. Each snowflake in winter now carried a moist little kiss to his forehead, his nose, his hands, his clothes, his eyelashes, and most often his hands. It came so he followed the winter, he pursued snow and ice and ended up in Alaska, the northern part of Alaska, so he would never be far from snow and ice and little kisses.

When first he had seen her, he thought she was gliding on soundless skiis and later that her feet were frozen together. They were not of course; she just had to hold them that way. She moaned with the wind, but only when the wind blew. When the wind quieted down, so did she. At first she was in front of him always, but later went to his side, and seldom left him while he was alone. His dog made way for her politely, sauntered to Joe's right when she was left and to the left when she was on Joe's right side. When he met up with a person though, she was no longer there.

It was not good for him, a lonely sad man, to have truck with one departed; he knew that very well. But what could he do? He could not send her away; she would not go when he asked her to; she was set on staying with him and told him so icily. He was thinking of going south, of meeting another spring, another summer half way; but then he remembered that after all it had been she he had loved, she who was to be his, and to run away from the one and only would be foolish. Nor did she disturb him, really. Only it was so unusual, he thought. It did not happen to many men that a dead Jane would follow them around. Gradually though he became quite used to having her around.

They could not talk together the way people do. That is, she talked and moaned, and he slowly told her many things but she did not answer questions and never wanted him to answer hers. It was more or less with them as with ordinary folk and he no longer had to depend on snowflakes; and kissed her icy mouth instead from which no warm breath blew.

She was not pale. On the contrary, quite rosy like the ice when the northern light was fading into dim day time and her eyes had been coldly blue even before she died.

In a manner of speaking, nothing much ever came of it. There was no issue as they say, no wailing child. And they were never really married. However they lived after the bible; they loved each other and shared a tender life up there in the northern colds and drifted snows.

"I meet you only to depart again," she said for instance.

"But why, my dear, my love?" he asked anxiously, and never she replied.

"I stay with you," she said, "as long as I am wanted." Testily, coolly. She walked beside him with no rhythm of her own and not a sound out of her still feet.

"How did you come here?" he would ask, and never she explained.

He took on odd jobs, unskilled for labor as he was, to stay alive. He did not want to join her state; never did he think of dying in the barren wasteland of the north.

In the short months of summer he tracked up even further north and hunted reindeer with a few Eskimos. They were kind and considerate because they could not understand him.

When he returned he did service to other men, lonely and single men as he was himself. He carried loads and cleaned their sleeping bags; he cooked supper for them and shook out their woolly blankets; he tended fires for them and swept their cabins clean, for food and a fee. He was soon able to pay for fare; he might have gone back home but he never dared to go by plane or train for fear now of losing her.

There had been a government surveyer he looked after, and a trapper for fox and winter weasel, the kind they call ermine. But he made a mistake when he joined up with Peetor Lauffert. This Lauffert had been sent up and wanted someone with him and found this Joe willing. The firm in Fairbanks ordered the thickness of a few ice fields measured, a very important job indeed.

This Peetor was a joyful man. He liked to eat and drink and he laughed at storms. In the bitterest cold he felt fine, dressed as he was in light cotton cloth with a swansdown lining and his face and feet covered first with government issued linaments against frostbite. He was provided with the best equipment to withstand hardships, and he let this Joe somebody share everything, even the small pink pills against the cold. Joe found Peetor a splendid man. And Peetor liked Joe. They stayed together for two seasons without a shout or a harshness between them, Peetor busy measuring his depths and Joe noting the fathoms, this or that calculation, so greenish or grey the color, or so clear down to the heavy sea below. And when they were eating together Peetor would say: "Have some more, Joe."

They went fishing together, where they could break the ice for their lines and brought up salmon sleek from wintersleep and round fat bellied glitterfish. And often on an evening, Joe walked away a spell to be with his loved one.

"I wonder what the sun was like," she might say, "above the trees and their crowning glory of leaves."

"Yellow and shiny, dear," said Joe and she moaned and asked what the sun was like; and he said: "Warm and light." And he tried to explain and she said: "Why does not somebody tell me what the sun was like down in Oregon where I lived?" Joe was mightily moved and could not reach her with words and was afraid to take her to Oregon and show her.

She was dressed as she would have been, had they found her and laid her out in a coffin, in a virgin bridal gown. The gown looked like melting silver and the folds never moved around her.

Or, "Can you hear the sound?" she would ask when there was none and he told her he had heard nothing and she said, "Can you hear the sound?"

Or she would point to something that was not even there and say, "Look lover! Oh just look!" And there was nothing to be seen.

But then one day in mid winter, she came to sit on the sled. Joe anxiously asked her what she was doing there with another man about. "What do you do here?" he asked, "with this man there with us? This is Mister Lauffert the man I work for."

And Peetor Lauffert said: "Do you dare talk to her? I never did dare talk to her."

Peetor had never talked to her, he said.

Hot wet fury swept over Joe's skin beneath the parka of swansdown and wind repellent cotton. He was standing on the runners and there she was sitting on the sled next to Peetor Lauffert, cosily near. And Peetor's breath came in a big cloud from his fat shiny mouth and frosted his beard and his eyebrows with glittering white frosting, after she had kissed him.

Joe could not move his lips and say something. It never got dark that night. It

became warmer and a few snowflakes danced. Then she was no longer with them.

After dinner Peetor Lauffert sang and whistled and never let on he heard his partner's silence, and never knew about the hatred growing with the waning hours of the day. And Joe kept thinking about the secret understanding they had, Peetor and Jane, and about how she must have spoken to him and perhaps told him she would stay as long as she was wanted and have him explain the sun to her. Wanted by this Peetor Lauffert. And how she must have followed him though her feet could never touch the ground and never moved. No, not even for Peetor.

And late that night, this Joe somebody or other went and killed Peetor Lauffert. He found an axe, big, and loosened from a slab of hard ice, an ice axe made of blue and strong and deadly cold ice. And he hit Peetor Lauffert on the head. It sounded like ice breaking up, like ice cracking, though it was a man's head that splintered and had cracked. The icy weapon was intact, cool and mighty until a warmer spring wind would melt it.

Afterwards this Joe and his Jane hurried together into the deep blue center of the Aurora Borealis, never to be heard from again. They may still be together.

Kenward G. Elmslie

THE WEATHER OF RIPENESS

There are just no Apollos today — no lions, no harbors of tan flesh. Tell me where have they swirled—into the antiquity of memory? Away from greenness and garlands? Well, we all must create something, which is why your father has turned to trees, his particular salvation. Yes, you all smile, and Laura, you especially shouldn't."
Laura said, "Mother, why must you be so mental at meals? Chew for a change like father."

Heads turned and watched the large man at the head of the table, bent over lamb, knife and fork precise and busy.

"Just words," he muttered.

"Such strength he has," Laura said. "He has no need to turn to trees."

"You swam last night, didn't you Laura? I was awake and heard you creep out," Tiny Minot said.

"You all reject tragedy so fiercely."

"Shhh."

"This is one of mother's talk days."

"Daniel Penn is not taking Laura to the dance," Tiny Minot said. "Dirksen is."

"If I swam or not is my own business," Laura said.

Midnight swims in a river, long ago in the finishing school. A few of the girls, splashing under the moon, became a secret convocation filled with shrieks until the Tyrant, assistants abreast with helpful flashlights, put a stop. The water cool, and the other bodies wan in moonlight. On father's shoulders too another time previous, his hands gripping thin ankles, the water touching feet, legs, then up, the swim with father in the lake, the water all cool and so lovely, and a secret game created. Father will teach me how to swim, every afternoon when the land cools.

"Daniel Penn is almost an Apollo. The boy Dirksen is not. Why do you dance with him, why is he taking you tonight? Laura, you know so few arts. A smile for example, or how to manipulate a fan or the equivalent nowadays. Instead, your flesh brown from the sun, long hours of work, and you plant trees as well as your father. I don't understand."

"Shhh."

"Mother. Mother. Mother."

"This whole complicated family. I do believe I must —"

The chair suddenly vacant, and then the sounds of chewing again.

"Mother is so —"

"Don't gabble," he said.

Daniel Penn. A figure posed on a beach by the lake. His toes drew aimlessly in the sand and his hair was golden, his face rich red, red-brown legs and arms, his body so, a largeness to it, filled with darting swiftness, the sudden dance of an arm, casual and spent freely, yet not without awareness. Well he frolicked that day and caused the girls to squeal, with swift chasing, and the darting tongue of his towel snapped at retreating, inviting figures. Heap, heap sand over body, the coolness of it like the lake, a shell of sand to provide immobility. The figures raced past, and he trod on the leg, covered by the sand, turned, and his eyes were so blue in that one second it was impossible to see anything else, beach, sky or lake, until that is, the frozen moment passed, the statue moved and was gone, and the dance resumed.

She waited for night, and when it came, the air was close, even under stars. The girls were elaborate in pink, the boys quick automatons, white-jacketed and capable. I long for the forest, she thought, and not here, so she broke away and was by herself, and looked back to see Dirksen puzzled, his hands hanging hugely, palms perplexed outward.

So it was she was standing in the garden, the club-house lights bright and the music vague and irrelevant, when she felt a touch on her shoulder and did not have to turn. And for the rest of the evening, she did not want to retreat to the forest, until, when the last of the party people had dispersed, her ride home with him began. They stopped wordlessly, and she was together and alone with him there, the trees for the first time strange, and the terror began. They were walking when he turned, and then there was a ferocious sinking, and the blue eyes lost themselves, becoming eyes of stone, and the arms felt tight and hard, and the hands, fingers of marble come alive, turned to fire, and there was a terrible burning and scorching, bodies close, until the thorns began and the desperate hunger of the lungs for the dawn air. There was the swift flight through the trees, the friendly trees known, the land known, and his voice Laura Laura and then at last the lake, and the beginning of the circles, large ones growing smaller, dissolving into a disappearance only to grow larger in a sudden strange emergence to grow smaller, more swiftly, with desperate quickness.

She was told it all, her mother's eyes luminous, the words pecked out with side-long thrusts of her head.

"No, not hush me this time. So extraordinary, you so white in his arms, he with his coat and his eyes wild with fear, and his whole body shaking with its frightening burden. Oh my lovely darling, the green days are indeed here."

"Let her rest," her father said. Then hand on hand, the coldness of the hand, the heaviness. "And you, hush."

He didn't see her again. He came to the forest sometimes, but she knew how to stand still among the friendly known trees, and his blue eyes never found another frozen moment.

Later she heard he had settled down, and she received a formal invitation, but the forest took so much time so that even the lake became a stranger's room.

Harriet Zinnes

Starface

Stars burn into the face today,
Burn into the face the light
That travels in wave lengths
To no discoveries of inward grace;
Sear the limpid look, the novae,
And plummeting from the sky
Jump the task of the sun
By heart explosions light years away.

The face in ashes, each pitiless,
Sinks slowly gray in the mauve earth.
The cinders with the human sparks ingather,
Brightly blown by day wind, linger,
Not to be reclaimed, to mortify, to just die.
Broken ash from star burn seeking its own quiet hour
In combustible universes of super-
Novae each five hundred years in the sky.

Mary Caroline Richards

A Land

i

makes hūmus they say, the fallen glade.
each man, the earth, erodes and fills.

igneous upheavals, and denudations, O

keep us our clay and basalt, our
soft beds and shale,
keep us our deserts and our caves

fossil-wise fancy dreams dig
and my millioned history spins
spins by the sun
spins presently
spins
in the big tent, O
caution! . . . this bush makes flesh,
tell scientists, and this hand makes
stone. Pulsing sea, in my veins' salt,
remember me!

ii

all loves' fine bones, like lacey herring,
keep —
in rock, in our body's rock,
in granite, of the heart,
fine, thin, curved, ribs, and treasure pockets of eyes
and the spine's flick
all the imperishable outline
in pen and ink? no, in fact, there, there
in the rock bed, in earth
which is what we have,
in changing dust, which is who we are,
carrying our beloved ghosts in our own bodies (our plot of ground)
our plot of ground, forgetting
and crying out for them; then suddenly
waked
to a skull's weight, a knee, we carry
in us —
last in, the geology of, our limbs!

James Schuyler

The Infant Jesus of Prague

I

One afternoon there were hollow far explosions, within thunder, and fire torn wire trash baskets; messages, understanding.

The shell cracked.

Number: zero to one closed the ring. Duality, eleven, the Roman two. Triads, tridents. Four spun on its unseen center, five, a star, spinning zero, the sun. Etcetera.

Hints, garbled saints, conversion of Jews. Clues in what was laughed at, imprisoned, tolerated, ignored, unnoticed.

* * *

O Jesus let this nigger go!

* * *

Hidden in a lamp shade shop, stitching by the light filtered through a silk lamp shade filled display window, the seamstress sewed her plan.

"What do you see?" "A machine." "What kind of a machine?" "A sewing machine." "What do you think of it?" "It is very beautiful."

"What do you see?" "A face." "Whose face?" "My own." "What would you like?" Pinned to a lamp shade, the solution to the cryptogram.

"I think we will meet again." "I am very busy." A smile. "You must be." Unspoken word, mother.

* * *

Woven on the hill with orange trees, couples bestow kisses. The sleeves of their shining garments, thick with silver and gold thread, of cut velvet, from their wrists thin as the smooth trunks of the fruited orange trees, of their hands resting on one another's shoulders. A dance in an orchard on meadow grass, wild flowers themselves as faces. No need of sky, when eyes such as these look into eyes such as these, within the sun, a mass of whirling fiery gases.

II

The faster the snow fell the thicker it lay lightly on the town. The sidewalks, the automobiles, the trestle, the best hotel called the Inn, approached by young people in evening clothes. As the shops were closing the dance was beginning. The orchestra was called the Hi-Hats. The young owner of the Inn watched at the door to the bar to see that those too plainly young to drink rum-and-coke did not. His wife, their age, had a narrow chin and a wide mouth. More was suspected than known.

* * *

Bearded and robed, throned in a lunette, he placed on her head a crown, she bending to him, her hands crossed at her breast, like lilies, her emblem.

* * *

"You're undecided now, so what are you going to do?"

* * *

His birthday drew near; or recently past? To their questions, various sets of answers. Christopher would come to his birthday party. Had they not brought him pink roses, one of the two of them said, I have seen Christopher? The day he created him, the voice said, "The one everyone loves, you belong to me." His robe light and finely striped green, his heat blossomed a pink rose bud pinned at his heart. A clear rain of his tears dewed in the petal joints, his sweat smelled of roses, for no more under the flapping of his banner, New Era, would they scuttle, his own family sick with vices creasing their mouths.

* * *

A flat valley, a river flat level with it. Rotting cabbages. The brand name of a chewing tobacco no longer marketed illegible on an unpainted barn. Rain on shale hills, the yellow mud splashing even the windshield of a touring car whose isinglass windows no longer can be snapped to the rusty snaps, if the windows any longer existed. On the edge of the next town the windows of the brick works were broken a long time ago.

* * *

"What is this?" "A thimble."
"What am I doing?" "Sewing."

* * *

He gave his smiles as blessings, platitudinous tracts their readers would look from and laugh, "So that's how it is. It had a meaning all along." Evening, flush from her bath, stepped naked, and shaken buildings trembled alight. Who swam out of the river, trumpeting purple notes? For it was horrible, that they might pray him, mind and soul, into the heart of a doll: bottled, worshipped, that they might run freely in flesh fresh from laundries. Then on, he was seldom seen without a book.

* * *

"I go alone in the city, passing through the crowd that doesn't know . . ."

III

Dark flakes sank in towers around the street lamps, a rain of May flies. No one walked among the grave stones and stone outhouse mausoleums, but in a bar with a bare wood floor a game of pinochle had been going for some time, and a player was dealt out and another took his place. While the man who was leaving wrapped a muffler his wife had knitted for him and which was very stretched around his neck, three boys in tuxedos ran in without topcoats. They ordered gin and ginger ale. The tallest, a basket ball star, spoke to someone who asked why they kids drank nigger drinks?

* * *

"Words mean what they say."

* * *

A Corridor from the kitchen they sensed boiled milk, the sulphur of stewing apricots. An old man's eyes, pale, rimless as the sun walking into the corridor at seven through the east window. "Mother and sisters died to watch over me. I am like the sun. I don't speak." Hot stewed apricots subside on cold oatmeal into blue milk in a light place from which the sun stepped to go on its route. Later, no letters.

* * *

A singing wreath.

* * *

Across the water lies the shore and its houses, folded like a fan. In the deep coal barge out of the January river wind bearing gulls, a prisoner turns his hands, his palms red through the palms of the cheap black wool gloves the shovel handle wears out so quickly.

Swinging up, the laden bucket spills lumps of coal. At the centre the boards are shoveled clear and gleam gray and silver. Or it is another day on another part of the island, shaped like a stone dividing a stream. Among the concrete grave markers a pale fire, its flames almost invisible in the sunlight. With crowbars, the prisoners try to break the grave markers from the frozen earth. Or they are in the mess hall, eating cake that tastes of soap, or there is nothing for them to do and they shovel a coal pile from where it is to a place next to it. Secretly, quickly, five share a cigarette. Curses flap into the sky like starlings, fall on them like frozen starlings.

* * *

Feast of Christ the King, crowned in Heaven, on earth with thorns.

* * *

Brooding at night in the toilet, he formulated a plan, and let go each new plan as he might a firefly gummed to a spider thread. The vacuum the release left filled with light, a tidal cave. Refracted through water, blues the grotto blue-green of arsenic spray, wavelet slaps echoed to tapped boxes. Any music, than this silence. "Man, you can't love me else I says you can. I says you can't."

IV

At the movies the lovers' fingers entwined. There were no disasters in the newsreel. The sky in the feature movie was blue, changelessly.

An automobile skidded at a corner and drove on. Christmas drew near. Middle-aged men read newspapers on glassed-in porches filled with plants. On the edge of town, on the few streets off the highway that led to a city, newer houses had picture windows, vast panes of glass, and no glassed-in porches. The snow fell like the notes of a harp.

* * *

"Why are you crying?" "I'm so happy."
"Why are you happy?" "The radio spoke to me."

* * *

Shaking out the sheet so it took the air as it had snapping on the line and fell in the watery way cloth designs itself, coarse and white. The blankets to be folded by two, lengthwise, like beginning a paper spill; square, like a card-table; oblong, like a fat letter. And the magazines and comic books and books replaced under the mattresses. And the baby's mess cleaned up and the slick terrazzo swabbed with water with disinfectant added to it; and the men waiting to use the communal razors on their three days' growths of beard: many times the cannibal house painter dipped the wide brush and flowed the paint smoothly in long strokes.

* * *

"His mother was a cute-sub-deb and his father the richest boy."

* * *

Rain fell like ashes.
"Ver-y ex-pen-sive."
"Please change the station." Or shut it off.

Boredom turned to him, a pack of playing cards in one hand, a book of card games in the other.

But a maple leaf turned white and had one green spot; leaves into hedges like confetti into hair (parades!); far-off neon of towns on hills when a broom pine wound its needled arms around the roundest winter sun; or it snowed.

Violence gathers in a small place: a room, a bed, a glove.

* * *

"I sleep on top of the covers with my head at the foot of the bed. I cannot raise my arm unless you tell me to. Let me stroll, shuffling, always at your side if you will let me. Will earth and sun and moon be joined? Will you take me to your mother?"

* * *

Jorge Cuesta

voice

Your voice, tremulous tassel of metals
that I bind with the anxiety of my life;
magnolia which loosens its bodice
to fly in astral petals.
Green murmur of cane fields
that the wind seizes in exquisite decoration
dawn with syllables of ermine
lashed by crystal kisses.
The breeze of lofty music
which strips the rain of brightness
in my restless channel of bitterness.
Your voice, palpitation of the fountain
of transparency of your pure life,
which destroys the shadow in my pathway.

translated by Geraldine Church

Philipe Thoby-Marcelin

THE PATHETIC RUNAWAY

Was it by day or night
In joy or sorrow
Was it yesterday or forever
That he had reclined
On the lyrical grasses of the year

Drawing out his body
To the height of a spirit from Guinea
Drawing out his sex
In the slithering companionship of snakes
Springing forth
With the boldness of bamboo

Embracing
The immense
The secret
The terrible

And his ear bent to madness
(God having put his hand
On the wind's mouth)
He listened
Through the rhythmic pulse
Of his howling wounds
To the bloody beat of a dancing revolt.

THE NOBLE SERVANT

Sarah they called you
And you came from Ja-mai-ca,
With that drawling English of the islands;
(But even better than your speech
Was your dish of rice and wild eggplant.)

Gigantic night whose lap we could reach
Only with the help of your hands,
It is thus we see you again,
That great violet laughter
Torn to the pulp,
Those tender polyp arms
Draining suffering and anger from us all.

Now being grown, we are surrounded,
Flesh and bone,
By devouring jackals,
—And you are among us no longer.

Having no offspring
This honorable poverty
We have invested for life
So that we may enjoy it to the full
When prisons crumble
Along with lies and the armies based on lies;
For in the end that will come,
And we shall have the patience to wait.

translated by William Jay Smith

Robert Cordier

A night. The moon. In the sky, clouds and your face of black, bathed and so beautiful, so beautiful that birds fly away. I love you.

A landscape. Red at the salt of the knives. The sun and my abrupt and sleepy eye. Why?

A cry. Another noise at the end of the field stretched out on its bed of earth. Our hope flung in the face of the blue day. And so much space. Why?

A table. A face leaning at the edge of evening. The night. Tears. Inevitable descent. Why?

The foam of your smile. You exploding in the mirror. Why?

Insects forced to die so quickly. Twilight falling. Murmuring. So many more deaths. Why?

Lamps extinguished. Pink breasts. Your voice is throbbing in pure water under the grass, broken on the pebbles. Why?

A wet memory grazes my vanity. Noise from the past. A cry from lost, unsatisfied childhood. That memory. Why?

Lovely flowers. The claw. Always the end as the snow begins. Your soft glance, like a dead leaf's. Why?

The song of others. My sparse enough destiny. The trees. Our distraught, ruined happiness growing old. Why?

In the water and idleness. In life. In songs. In my blood I hear your cry. Why?

I cut myself on the blade of your look. Meadow where my greenness grows. The rain soaks the fields. Why?

The birds' wings fall with the night. Why?

At fierce descents, at dawn. We hang up for lack of a smile. We don't see ourselves. Ever. Why?

You confess more than you are hiding. Why?

One day my hand, grown transparent at the end of my arm, entered my pale, childlike eyes. Why?

At the breath of the flames each is red but not for long. Why?

translated by John Ashbery

Jorge Cuesta

VOZ

Tu voz, trémula espiga de metales
que con el ansia de mi vida ciño;
magnolia que desata tu corpiño
para volar en pétales astrales.
Verde murmurio de cañaverales
que el viento empuna en prodigioso aliño
aurora con las silabas de armiño
azotada por besos de cristales.
La brisa de una música de altura
que deshoja la lluvia de luceros
en mi cauce azogado de amargura.
Tu voz, palpitación de los veneros
de transparencia de tu vida pura,
que aniquila la sombra en mis senderos.

Philipe Thoby-Marcelin

LE MARRON PATHETIQUE

Était-ce de jour ou de nuit
De joie ou de douleur
Etait-ce d'hier ou de toujours
Il s'était allongé
Dans les herbes lyriques de l'année

Etirant sons corps
A la taille d'un guinnarou
Etirant son sexe
Dans la glissante amitié des couleuvres
Jaillissant
Comme une audace de bambou

Etreignant
L'immense
Le secret
Le terrible

Et l'oreille au ras de la folie
(Dieu ayant mis sa main
Sur la bouche du vent)
Il écoutait battre
Au rhythme élancé
De blessures pleines de cris
Les pas de sang d'une dansante émeute.

LA SERVANTE AU GRAND COEUR

Sarah qu'on t'appelait
Et tu venais de Djoméca
Avec cet anglais traînant des îles
(Mais on lui préférait
Ton plat de riz vert aux amourettes).

Géante nuit au giron inaccessible
N'était le secours de tes mains,
C'est ainsi qu'on te revoit
Et ce grand rire violet
Déchiré jusqu'à la pulpe
Et tes bras de poulpe attendrie
Suçant la colère et la souffrance.

Mais voici qu'on est homme
A présent
— Une triste proie d'os et de chair
Environnée de chacals
— Et tu n'es plus des nôtres.

Cette honorable misère
N'ayant pas d'enfant
Nous l'avons placée à fonds perdu
Afin d'en jouir jusqu'à la fin
Quand les bastilles retourneront au néant
Et les mensonges et leurs armées
Car cela doit venir
Et nous aurons la patience d'attendre.

Robert Cordier

Une nuit. La lune. Au ciel les nuages et ton visage de noir baigné et si beau, si beau que les oiseaux s'enfuient. Je t'aime.

Un paysage. Rouge au sel des couteaux. Le soleil et mon oeil abrupt el lourd. Pourquoi?

Un cri. Un autre bruit au bout du champs allongé sur son lit de terre. Notre espoir jeté à la face du jour bleu. Et tant d'espace. Pourquoi?

Une table. Un visage penché au bord du soir. La nuit. Les larmes. Descente inévitable. Pourquoi?

L'écume de ton sourire. Ton éclatement dans le miroir. Pourquoi?

Les insectes forcés de mourir si vite. Le soir descendant. Murmures. Tant de morts en plus. Pourquoi?

Les lampes éteintes. Les poitrines roses. Palpitante est ta voix en eau pure sous l'herbe, brisée sur les cailloux. Pourquoi?

Un souvenir mouillé effleure ma vanité. Un bruit du passé. Un cri de l'enfance perdue, inassouvie. Ce souvenir. Pourquoi?

Des fleurs belles. La serre. Toujours la fin à la descente de la neige. Ton doux regard de feuille morte. Pourquoi?

Le chant des autres. Mon destin assez épars. Les arbres. Le vieillissement de notre bonheur éperdu, détruit. Pourquoi?

Dans l'eau et la paresse. Dans la vie. Dans les chants. Dans mon sang j'entends ton cri. Pourquoi?

Je me coupe à la lame de tes regards. Prairie où pouse ma verdure. La pluie détrempe les champs. Pourquoi?

Les ailes des oiseaux tombent à la nuit. Pourquoi?

Aux furieuses descentes, à l'aube. On s'accroche faute de sourire. On ne se voit pas. Jamais. Pourquoi?

Tu avoues trop de choses pour ce que tu caches. Pourquoi?

La main, au bout du bras devenu transparent, m'est entrée un jour dans les yeux, mes pâles yeux d'enfant. Pourquoi?

Au souffle des flammes chacun est rouge mais ne le reste pas. Pourquoi?

JOHN ASHBERY, A.B., Harvard (1949), M.A., Columbia, has had work published in *Furioso, Poetry New York, Partisan Review, New Directions,* and *New World Writing. Turandot,* a pamphlet of poems, appeared this winter.

ELISE ASHER, born in Chicago, now living in New York, has appeared in *Poetry, Botteghe Oscure, Partisan Review, Contemporary Poetry,* and *Yale Poetry Review.* In November, she had an exhibition of paintings in New York City.

DAISY ALDAN, a doctorate student of English Literature at N.Y.U. and a teacher of English at the School of Industrial Art, has had a volume of poetry published, and work in *Proteus Quarterly, Wake,* and *The English Review.* As an actress, she is known on major radio networks.

ANNE BERNAYS, twenty three years old, a New Yorker, and a graduate of Barnard, is managing editor of *Discovery.* She appears in print here for the first time.

ROBERT CORDIER, who is in his early twenties, was born in Belgium, and came to the United States two years ago. A pamphlet of his poems is being published in Paris by Pierre Seghers.

JORGE CUESTA is a Mexican poet who died at the age of thirty eight in 1942. The poem in FOLDER first appeared in *Boletin Cultural Mexicano.*

KENWARD ELMSLIE, a 1950 graduate of Harvard, wrote the lyrics for two musical works, *Song of Solomon,* and *Caravan to Mecca,* which were performed at the Karami Playhouse in Cleveland. He is being published here for the first time.

ARTHUR GREGOR has had poetry and plays published in *Poetry Chicago, Accent, The Yale Review, The Quarterly Review of Literature, Interim,* and *Voices,* among others. In 1948, he was awarded the *First Appearance* prize by *Poetry Chicago.* He is thirty and works as an electrical engineer.

KENNETH KOCH, A.B., Harvard (1948), M.A., Columbia, has appeared in *Poetry* and *Furioso.* A volume of poetry was published in September by the Tibor de Nagy Gallery.

V. R. LANG, one of the original members of the Poet's Theatre in Cambridge, has appeared in *Poetry Magazine.* Her verse play, *Fire Exit,* was presented this season by the Artist's Theatre.

GERRIT LANSING was born in Albany, raised on a farm near Cleveland, Ohio, and is at present, living in New York City.

ALFRED LESLIE is twenty six years old, and lives in Hoboken, New Jersey. His paintings have been exhibited at the Kootz and Stable Galleries, and in the Museum Purchase Fund Exhibition, now touring the United States. His third one man show is being held in May at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery.

FRANK O'HARA, A.B., Harvard (1950), M.A., The University of Michigan, where he won the Hopwood award for poetry. His poems have appeared in *Partisan Review, Poetry Chicago, Accent, New World Writing,* and a pamphlet, *A City Winter and Other Poems.*

MARY CAROLINE RICHARDS received her Ph.D. at the University of California. She taught there, at the University of Chicago, and at Black Mountain College. Six chapters of her translation of Antonin Artaud's *The Theatre and Its Double*, will appear shortly in *Origin*.

ANNE RYAN was born in New Jersey. Her stories have been published in *Botteghe Oscure*, and *The Paris Review*. She is a painter as well as a writer, and shows at the Betty Parsons Gallery.

JAMES SCHUYLER, born in Chicago in 1923, attended Bethany College in West Virginia. His poems have appeared in *Accent*, *The New Yorker*, *New World Writing*, and *New Directions*. His playlet, *Shopping and Waiting* which appeared in *FOLDER 1*, will be presented this season at the Poet's Theatre in Cambridge. *A Picnic Cantata*, with music by Paul Bowles, was presented at Town Hall in March.

WALTER SILVER, a free lance photographer, was born in New York in 1921. He served as an aerial photographer in the U. S. Air Force. He is represented in the permanent photograph collection at the Museum of Modern Art.

WILLIAM JAY SMITH has been a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, and a Phi Beta Kappa poet at Columbia. He is the author of two volumes of poetry, and he received *Poetry Magazine's Young Poet's Prize*. He has taught at Washington University, Columbia, and Williams.

PHILIPE THOBY-MARCELIN, a leading poet in Haiti, has had three volumes of poems published. His novel, *Canape Vert*, written in collaboration with his brother, Pierre, received the first prize in the second Latin American contest, sponsored by Farrar, Rhinehart. The poems appearing here are from *A Fonds Perdu*, a Pierre Seghers publication.

DONALD WINDHAM, novelist (The Dog Star), playwright, and short story writer, whose prose has appeared in many periodicals, is having his first published poems in FOLDER 2.

RUTH L. YORCK was born in Germany, and known in literary circles there until the war when she came to America. Her first book published in English was *The Man Who Killed Hitler*. In 1953, her American short stories were collected, translated into German, and published under the title, *The Master Tenderness*.

HARRIET ZINNES has appeared in *Poetry Magazine*, *The New York Times*, and other periodicals. She has been associate editor of *Harper's Bazaar*, and has taught at Queens College. She resides in Oklahoma.

† Anne Ryan suffered a stroke while working on a collage in her studio, and died several weeks later, on April 17.

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